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Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict

Letter dated 15 August 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum is attached to this request (see annex).

In view of the wide-ranging issues which this item raises, I would be grateful if the item could be allocated to the plenary of the General Assembly.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Stewart **Eldon**
Chargé d'affaires

00-60807 (E) 150800

Annex to the letter dated 15 August 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Explanatory memorandum

The proposed item reflects the need to address the issue of the role played by diamonds in conflicts throughout the world. In a number of such conflicts, rebel forces have gained access to local diamond mines and illicitly exported diamonds to help finance arms purchases and other activities. Action is already being taken in a number of international forums. The international diamond industry has called for each rough diamond importing country to prohibit the import of rough diamonds unless they have been certified by an accredited authority in the exporting country. The group of countries taking part in the "Kimberley Working Group" have made similar proposals.

Diamonds are produced in approximately 22 States. A further four or five are major importers. The worries of consumers about the origin of diamonds have a potential impact on the legitimate trade. The issue should therefore be addressed by the General Assembly with a view to taking appropriate action to deal with this problem.